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News Release

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For Immediate Release

New Jersey's Community College Presidents Support Higher Standards

TRENTON, N.J.—Today, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges released the following statement from New Jersey's 19 community college presidents regarding the Common Core Curriculum and aligned assessments:

“The presidents of New Jersey's 19 community colleges want to see every student succeed and achieve an associate's degree or occupational certificate. Too often, however, students' progress is delayed because they lack the skills needed for college-level work. We believe that higher K-12 standards and aligned student assessments are necessary to help ensure that students arrive at our colleges prepared to meet their academic and career goals. Toward that end, the community college presidents support the implementation of the Common Core Curriculum and aligned PARCC assessments in mathematics, reading and writing.

“Our colleges already use common assessment tools and definitions of ‘college ready’ in English and math. We collaborate with school districts across the state and actively work to increase the number of high school graduates who come to us ready to succeed in college-level instruction. When scores from the 11th grade PARCC assessments have been validated and made available, we will review the PARCC achievement levels and compare them to scores we now use on Accuplacer, SAT, ACT, and other measures for determining college readiness. We anticipate using PARCC scores as one of our placement tools beginning in 2016.

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“We currently administer math and English placement tests to many New Jersey high school juniors and seniors. Students who do not achieve college-ready scores are offered several options to improve their skills and avoid remedial courses in college. These options include ‘bridge courses’ during the senior year or during the summer offered in the high school or at the college; short intensive summer ‘boot camps’ on the college campus; and individualized computer-based instruction in English and mathematics. Students who demonstrate college readiness can take credit courses either on our campuses or in dual-credit programs offered at their high schools.

“PARCC scores will provide more timely and detailed information on academic progress to students, teachers and parents. These scores will be a valuable tool for colleges in our work to help high school students avoid remediation and begin study in college-level courses. We believe that the Common Core Curriculum and aligned PARCC assessments will help reduce the need for remediation in college and increase opportunities for New Jersey’s students to achieve academic and career success.”

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey’s 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-headed organization that joins the leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community college sector before the state legislature and other branches of government.